United Nations E/CN.5/2018/4

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
22 November 2017

Original: English

Commission for Social Development
Fifty-sixth session
29 January–7 February 2018
Item 3 (b) (iv) of the provisional agenda
Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: review of the relevant United Nations plans and programmes of action pertaining to the situation of social groups: Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002

Third review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report has been prepared in response to the request of the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 2015/5. It assesses the third review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002, at the international level. The report gives an overview of the regional review and appraisal processes and describes overall trends based on an analysis of the outcome of regional reviews and appraisals and highlights continuing gaps in, and challenges to, the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/5, entitled "Modalities for the third review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002".

2. The report presents the conclusions of the third review and appraisal exercise carried out by Member States and coordinated through the Regional Commissions, as requested in paragraph 7 of resolution 2015/5. The report provides an overview of the review and appraisal process in each region, identifies key major trends and roadblocks to implementation across regions within the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the implementation of which the United Nations system is now focused on supporting, and identifies future areas of focus for regional policy. Conclusions and recommendations are offered for the consideration of Member States. Examples of specific policy developments in each region are also provided.

3. The full summary reports produced by Regional Commissions are available online from www.un.org/development/desa/ageing/3rdreview-mipaa/3rdreview-mipaa-regional-review.html.

II. Overview of the third review and appraisal process of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002

4. The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) undertook a mixed method of information gathering, consisting of a questionnaire to member States ascertaining availability of selected data, document reviews, database searches, Internet searches and case studies, to produce an overview report. Overall, ECA reports that, although there has been progress in policy formulation and development, implementation remains uneven, with the most progress being made in the expansion of non-contributory pensions. The lack of data disaggregated by age and sex on even the basic sociodemographic and health indicators is acute and makes the tracking of implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing very difficult. Much of the available data are for younger age groups, and the data that are especially relevant to older persons, such as those on non-communicable diseases, are often lacking. Insufficient funding continues to be a roadblock to implementation.

5. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) prepared two documents for the Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on the Third Review and Appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, held in Bangkok from 12 to 14 September 2017: (a) a note by the secretariat on Government actions towards the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002: achievements and remaining challenges (E/ESCAP/MIPAA/IGM.2/2); and (b) a note by the secretariat providing an overview of trends in population ageing and related institutional responses in Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/MIPAA/IGM.2/1). Member States adopted an outcome document that prioritizes action for the next five years to further implement the Madrid Plan of Action (E/ESCAP/MIPAA/IGM.2/3, annex II). ESCAP also produced a publication entitled *Addressing the Challenges of Population Ageing in Asia and the Pacific: Implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing*, which presents the outcomes of the review and appraisal and discusses population ageing within the context of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for

Sustainable Development.[1] ESCAP notes uneven progress across the region and across the priority areas of the Madrid Plan of Action. While there is an increasing awareness of population ageing reflected in national policies and legislation, the scope of policies varies, and policies sometimes lack implementation and monitoring plans. Progress is still too weak in the provision of social protection. Cash transfer programmes for those living in extreme poverty are often means-tested and unevenly distributed, and offer very low benefits, which particularly affects older women, who are disproportionately represented as beneficiaries of cash transfers. Providing universal and free access to health care remains a challenge, and there are limited geriatric facilities beyond the high-income member States.

6. For members of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the focus since the second review and appraisal has been on encouraging longer working lives and maintaining functional abilities; promoting participation, non-discrimination and social inclusion; promoting dignity, health and independence in old age; and maintaining and enhancing intergenerational solidarity. A synthesis document was produced by ECE that analysed progress made towards achieving those goals.[2] The Commission organized a ministerial conference on ageing in Lisbon on 21 and 22 September 2017, entitled "A sustainable society for all ages: realizing the potential of living longer". A civil society and a research forum took place on 20 September, both of which adopted declarations.[3] A ministerial declaration was adopted by member States.[4] ECE points out that the past five years in the region have seen a difficult and uneven recovery from the global economic crisis, with the remnants of persistent unemployment and increased poverty rates and social exclusion in some member States, particularly in Commonwealth of Independent States countries and Southern Europe.

7. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) held a regional review meeting in Beirut on 3 August 2017, and issued a comprehensive report entitled "Ageing in the ESCWA region: third review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing — 2017".[5] The region has member States at various levels of demographic ageing and economic development and diverse cultural and political processes, which is reflected in policy development and implementation. There is also more focus on certain policy issues than on others, which reflects economic and cultural differences, and the uneven availability of research on ageing and age- and sex-disaggregated data. ESCWA notes that "a main barrier to the advancement of the ageing agenda has been the disconnect between policies passed by relevant institutions and the degree and scope of implementation on the ground".

[1] *Addressing the Challenges of Population Ageing in Asia and the Pacific: Implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.17.II.F.17). Available from www.unescap.org/publications/addressing-challenges-population-ageing-asia-and-pacific-implementation-madrid.

[2] Available from www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/pau/age/Ministerial_Conference_Lisbon_Practical_infos/Synthesis_report_MIPAA15_Room_Document_with_Annex.pdf.

[3] Statement of the UNECE Regional Research Forum on Ageing to the Ministerial Conference on Ageing, held in Lisbon from 20 to 22 September 2017, available from www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/pau/age/Ministerial_Conference_Lisbon/Research_Forum/Statement_ResearchForum_Lisbon_2017.pdf, and political declaration of non-governmental organizations made to the ECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing, available from www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/pau/age/Ministerial_Conference_Lisbon/NGO_Forum/NGO_Political_Declaration_-_final.pdf.

[4] 2017 Lisbon Ministerial Declaration, "A sustainable society for all ages — realizing the potential of living longer", 22 September 2017. Available from www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/pau/age/Ministerial_Conference/Lisbon/Documents/2017_Lisbon_Ministerial_Declaration.pdf.

[5] Available from www.un.org/development/desa/ageing/wp-content/uploads/sites/24/2017/02/escwa-mipaa-report2017.pdf.

8. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) undertook the review and appraisal exercise via the headquarters office in Chile and the subregional office for the Caribbean in Trinidad and Tobago, based on the priorities of the San José Charter on the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean (2012).[6] The Charter added additional human rights steps to protect the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of older persons to strengthen the rights perspective in implementing the Madrid Plan of Action. The ECLAC subregional office produced a synthesis report for the Caribbean and held an intergovernmental preparatory meeting on 1 and 2 June 2017.[7] The synthesis report notes that the subregion is marked by persistent poverty, high informal sector employment, social inequalities, a low level of institutional development and incomplete social security coverage. ECLAC headquarters held a preparatory expert meeting on the monitoring of the San José Charter in November 2016. The Fourth Regional Intergovernmental Conference on Ageing and the Rights of Older Persons was held in Paraguay from 27 to 30 June 2017. Member States adopted the Asunción Declaration on Building Inclusive Societies: Ageing with Dignity and Rights.[8] ECLAC prepared a report entitled "Challenges to the Autonomy and Interdependent Rights of Older Persons",[9] in which two key emerging issues for the protection of the human rights of older persons were identified: equality and non-discrimination in access to credit, and the right to end-of-life palliative care and a dignified death. In addition, the two continuing issues of long-term care and abuse of older persons, and their related commitments, were also analysed.

III. Major trends

A. Ending poverty in all its forms everywhere

9. The implementation of social protection systems and measures to achieve substantial coverage of the poor and vulnerable by 2030 is the key target of Sustainable Development Goal 1 and also reflects priority direction 1, issues 6 and 7, on eradication of poverty, and income security, social protection/social security and poverty prevention, respectively, of the Madrid Plan of Action.

10. Older persons in all regions can be vulnerable to poverty, although there are often wide variations between and even within countries. For instance, the average poverty rate among older persons in 10 countries of the Caribbean subregion is 17 per cent, with a wide variation from 7 per cent in Trinidad and Tobago to 34 per cent in Belize. This reflects a wide divergence in the availability of contributory pensions, depending on the size of the informal and formal labour markets. For example, in Belize, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, one third or less of older persons receive a social security pension. ECLAC reports that developments since 2012 include small increases in pension levels (Bermuda) or pension framework revisions (Anguilla). In Jamaica, however, a national social protection strategy was adopted in 2014. Most Caribbean countries have implemented non-contributory pensions, with Guyana and Suriname having the only universal models. In Belize, as of 2013, non-contributory pensions covered one quarter of the older population.

[6] Available from http://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/21535/1/S2012897_en.pdf.

[7] See www.cepal.org/en/events/caribbean-preparatory-meeting-fourth-regional-intergovernmental-conference-ageing-and-rights.

[8] See https://conferenciaenvejecimiento.cepal.org/4/en/programme/consideration-and-adoption-agreements.

[9] See https://conferenciaenvejecimiento.cepal.org/4/en/documents/challenges-autonomy-and-interdependent-rights-older-persons.

11. In the African region, there have also been a few positive developments in starting or expanding the reach of income support to the general population and older persons. Kenya is adding a universal pension scheme in January 2018 for those aged 70 and over to improve on the National Social Protection Policy of 2012 and a national safety net programme, with cash and access to credit for vulnerable households with persons aged 65 and over. Zambia has increased its national budget allocation from 2.7 per cent in 2015 to 4.2 per cent in 2017 for social protection programmes in general, which includes a social cash transfer programme for qualifying households. In 2015, Madagascar adopted a national social protection programme aimed at improving living conditions, with an emphasis on vulnerable persons in general.

12. Addressing the link between poverty and social exclusion also remains a priority in the ECE region, with a focus on older women. Cyprus introduced a guaranteed minimum income in 2014, as did Slovakia in 2015, to ensure income above the national poverty line. In Portugal, the solidarity supplement for the elderly that was first introduced in 2006 to combat poverty among older persons was increased in 2016 following a reduction in its value and after its coverage declined by 29.8 per cent between 2013 and 2016. To reduce women's risk of poverty in old age, Kazakhstan in 2014 introduced a subsidy for mandatory pension contributions for employed women who are on maternity leave until their child is 1 year old. Czechia noted that a large informal economy in rural areas comprised mostly of small-scale farming with low productivity led to high levels of non-contribution to health and social insurance plans and therefore poverty in old age.

13. ESCWA reports that labour participation and retirement policies for older persons remain contingent on national social and economic resources and needs, and have exhibited little change over the past five years. Therefore, while programmes that ensure social security and income generation specifically for older persons have increased during that time, they remain few and uneven across countries. For the most part, existing programmes target the general population rather than older people specifically.

14. In the ESCAP region, most countries have some type of pension system, although coverage remains low in general and it is common for less than half of the working age population to have access to a pension. Nevertheless, pension reforms and expansion have been evident in some countries, particularly in rapidly ageing societies. In China, a contributory pension was introduced in urban and then in rural areas, with 80 per cent of both populations covered by 2012. In 2014, the two schemes were integrated into one and this was followed by the establishment of an occupational pension system in 2015. By the end of 2016, the Chinese population insured under the pension insurance system had reached 888 million.[10] In the Republic of Korea, the pension system was reformed in 2015 to provide a guaranteed basic pension to all older persons to address high poverty rates among that group. The Russian Federation is developing a three-part strategy on long-term development of the pension system for the period 2012–2030, which incentivizes voluntary later retirement through increased benefits. While most countries in the region have means-tested non-contributory pensions for the very poor, such schemes tend to have very low benefit levels. Myanmar recently introduced a new universal social pension for those over age 90, and in 2014 China launched an old-age allowance policy, giving those over 70 a monthly allowance adjusted for location and age. Some member States, such as China, Sri Lanka and Tonga, are also starting to target support for workers in the very large informal sector. Singapore introduced

[10] Statement to the Third Committee of the General Assembly by the Government of China, 3 October 2017.

the Silver Support Scheme in 2016 for older persons in the bottom 20 per cent income group and a universal long-term care assistance scheme in 2016 targeting the most vulnerable groups, including older persons, with monthly cash assistance.

B. Ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages

15. From a multidimensional perspective, and closely linked to ending poverty everywhere, Sustainable Development Goal 3, on ensuring health and well-being at all ages, which is also the goal of the Madrid Plan of Action priority direction II, remains a priority in all regions. As noted during the second review and appraisal, however, health policy initiatives are less developed in some regions than in others. Furthermore, the pace of development of mental health policies, particularly for older persons, continues to be slow in some regions.

16. In the Caribbean region, health-care systems are mostly two-tier, being 60 per cent public and 40 per cent private, and demand for free care often outstrips resources, in particular, for secondary and tertiary care. Nevertheless, developments have taken place in efforts to expand universal health care access, for example, through the Bermuda Health Strategy 2014–2019 and the FutureCare Benefits programme, which will ensure access to basic insurance and essential health care for all. Similarly, in Sint Maarten, a draft ordinance for a national health insurance scheme is due to be finalized in 2017. Unfortunately, there has been little progress in the development of new mental health policies and services, with only the Cayman Islands reporting the finalization of a mental health policy and the construction of an adult mental health facility.

17. In addition, little information has been reported on the further development of palliative care services, and the little information that does exist appears insufficient. Nevertheless, Trinidad and Tobago opened the first publicly funded palliative care facility in 2014, although it is still undersupplied. No palliative care services are available at all in Grenada, which is just one example of the global shortage of palliative care services and supplies. In Latin America, the Ministry of Health of Chile designed the national health strategy for the 2011–2020 period, aimed at improving health throughout the life cycle. In Colombia, the statutory law adopted in 2015 on the right to health in accordance with the principle of equality specifies that the State must adopt public policies for the improvement of the health of low-income people, vulnerable groups and those subject to special protection, which includes older persons. Mental health care has seen some progress, with Costa Rica adopting a national plan for Alzheimer's disease and related dementias for the period 2014–2024, along with other developments in Chile, Cuba and Peru.

18. In the ECE region, the active ageing concept that member States endorsed at their second review and appraisal regional meeting in 2012 saw several countries, such as Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia and Spain, developing comprehensive national strategies to foster active ageing and enhance the well-being of older persons. Greece started a national pilot project on prevention and health promotion for older individuals. In 2015, the focus was on diabetes, and in 2016 on osteoporosis.

19. The World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe, in *The European Mental Health Action Plan 2013–2020*, noted an increasing prevalence of dementia in ageing populations, typically 5 per cent in people over 65 and 20 per cent in those over 80. One in five countries has developed national strategies and action plans to address the specific challenges related to dementia, including Austria, Denmark, Israel, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Portugal and Slovenia. Germany set up a national alliance for people with dementia. Cyprus launched an educational programme in

2014 that targets families and caregivers of people with cognitive disorders. Canada initiated Dementia Friends Canada in 2015, in collaboration with the Alzheimer Society of Canada. In Portugal, a new pilot project in 2014 surveys the population with dementia to ensure prevention and early diagnosis and to provide patients with a better quality of life.

20. Ukraine is working on developing a palliative care strategy focusing on palliative care at home and local social service provision. Israel launched a national programme for people in end-of-life situations and for palliative care in June 2016. Canada has invested significantly in the past eight years in palliative care research, with funding committed by the Government since 2013 to support training for front-line health-care providers. Austria has pooled federal, regional and local budgets to fund hospice care; a hospice and palliative care forum was set up in 2015 to implement measures to ensure dignity at the end of life. Further steps have been taken to facilitate mobile hospice and palliative care, with funding since 2013 and an increase in the number of mobile teams.

21. In the ESCAP region, progress was also seen on the enhancement of health-care services to address lifelong access to care and healthy ageing. Turkey adopted a universal action plan and implementation programme on healthy ageing for the period 2015–2020, which includes improved quality and access to services, while Sri Lanka adopted a national policy on elderly health in 2014. Further developments were noted, with a national health-care programme for senior citizens in the Philippines adopted in 2012, a decision by Viet Nam on the improvement of health care for older persons for the 2017–2025 period and the twelfth five-year plan in China for medical and health services, the Healthy China 2030 plan and a national fitness programme for the 2016–2020 period.

22. Nevertheless, although two thirds of ESCAP survey respondents reported the provision of free or subsidized health care to older persons, out-of-pocket expenses are significant, even in countries where older persons are legally entitled to free services. Efforts have been made, however, to expand the coverage of health insurance, for instance in Kyrgyzstan in 2012 and Armenia in 2015. Singapore enhanced its basic health insurance in 2015 and its severe disability insurance for older persons in 2016. The Republic of Korea reduced the age of eligibility for national health insurance from 75 in 2012 to 70 in 2015 and 65 in 2016. Further, in China, the law on the protection of the rights and interests of older persons was revised in 2015 to give priority health care access to those with financial difficulties and those without family support.

23. At the same time, less than half of survey respondents reported the existence of mental health services for older persons. If any did exist, they were administered through a universal mental health programme, without specific services for older persons. Efforts are under way in China, through the national mental health working plan for the 2015–2020 period, with a specific provision for older persons. Also, Singapore has a community mental health master plan which includes dementia, and Thailand has had a project to improve the system for mental health promotion and mental health problem prevention among older persons since 2016. Australia instituted a dementia training programme in 2016, with accredited education for care personnel in dementia care.

24. In the ESCWA region since 2012, countries with rapidly ageing populations have progressed with health-related policies and programmes, particularly with regard to preventing and treating non-communicable diseases. Such policies and programmes have been far less apparent in ESCWA countries whose populations have been ageing slowly or moderately. Overall, countries experiencing a rapid or moderate pace of ageing appear to have absorbed policies and programmes for older

persons into existing health-related initiatives such as non-communicable disease screening, smoking cessation and free medication for older persons, more so than those countries experiencing a slow pace of ageing. Also, programmes targeting the health of older persons within primary care centres appear to be widespread across ESCWA countries. Meanwhile, ensuring universal health coverage remains a concern and was noted by several countries as the most pressing issue for the well-being of older people. This has been achieved in Jordan, Kuwait, Oman and Tunisia, and is under way in Lebanon. Kuwait issued a national health strategy in 2016, but it has yet to develop a national plan of action.

Nevertheless, the mental health of older persons is also often underrepresented in policies and programmes, although new initiatives have been reported in countries with rapidly ageing populations, such as Lebanon, where the Ministry of Public Health has recently launched a mental health programme, and Morocco, where the latest national strategy for older persons prioritizes mental health as part of the health and well-being of older persons. Six countries also reported recognition of geriatrics as a specialty on its own, namely, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, the Sudan and Tunisia, but there continue to be vast variations in the number of geriatricians across countries.

It can be argued that ensuring the well-being and social inclusion of older persons through the provision of care services, either informal or formal, while not mentioned specifically in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development or its goals, falls under providing social protection and ensuring health and well-being. Nevertheless, the fact that most informal caregivers, formal care workers and care receivers are women is also important to the achievement of Goal 5, on the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

In the ECE region, many countries, for example, Austria, Germany, Estonia, the Netherlands, Romania and the Russian Federation, have increased their investment in the provision and quality of long-term care services to meet growing needs. Estonia increased the funding for nursing care services by approximately 40 per cent between 2012 and 2015. The Long-term Care Act 2015 in the Netherlands covers people in the most vulnerable categories, such as those requiring permanent supervision or 24-hour care. New legislation in Germany comprehensively restructured social long-term care insurance and improved benefits by a total of €5 billion per year, with financing through increased contributory payments to the long-term care insurance scheme. The Government of Sweden earmarked over €100 million in 2015 and a further €200 million in 2016 to increase staffing levels, with the aim of raising the quality of care for older people.

To make the administration and delivery of home-care services more efficient and better coordinated, there have been increasing efforts to integrate social and nursing care services. In Lithuania, the Integral Assistance Development Programme was launched in 2013 to enable people to receive assistance at home and to help family carers to remain in the labour market. Financed through the European Social Fund, the programme provides nursing and social services for people with disabilities and older people needing care, as well as advice to their family caregivers, and was extended with a new action plan for the 2016–2019 period.

29. In the ECLAC region, Chile has made progress in the design and implementation of a new subsystem for the social protection scheme "Chile cuida" to support caregivers and care receivers, in both informal and formal settings. Further, Chile has also since 2015 made advances in the development of training programmes and certification for caregivers, as well as the development of

protocols for long-term care residences to set minimum standards of care and promote human rights, which are being expanded to all care residences.

30. Uruguay set up a national comprehensive care system in 2015, which provides tele-assistance services as part of home-based care, day centres and long-term care services. In 2017, four new long-term care centres and four day centres have been built. At the same time, Latin American member States saw progress in the regulation of care providers and centres. For instance, Peru approved the regulation of care centres for older persons, covering three types of care centres: residential, day and night centres.

31. In the ESCAP region, many member States are also now focused on improving the quality of long-term care and moving from what is the norm in many countries, of total reliance on family with no State intervention, to the introduction of new models of care. For example, Myanmar launched community-based care programmes in 16 villages and the Government of Thailand has developed a comprehensive community care services programme. Nevertheless, most countries in the region reported that any care costs were borne by families or included in formal insurance coverage. Japan, for example, amended its insurance plan in 2012 to introduce an integrated community care system in which older persons move between different facilities to receive the most appropriate care.

32. In the ESCWA region, some development has been observed in the introduction of home-care programmes in Morocco and Tunisia, which are provided through mobile care units that deliver health-care services to disabled dependent older persons. Other age-friendly health-care programmes, home-care programmes and old-age home health programmes were also reported by countries with moderately ageing populations such as Jordan and Oman. In general, however, the care sector remains underdeveloped.

33. In the ECLAC region, the Caribbean countries tend to have uncoordinated systems of care for older persons. Many of the countries in the subregion rely heavily on non-governmental organizations to either run or assist in running care programmes, as well as those long-term care homes which exist. ECLAC notes that in general there is limited oversight by Governments. Nevertheless, Trinidad and Tobago is in the process of adopting legislation on homes for older persons, and Sint Maarten is drafting a social care policy for home care. Home-care services and day centres exist in Bermuda; a personal home care benefit was introduced in 2015 and a long-term care action plan was adopted in 2017 to further address care needs within a year and to set out a strategy which will also increase private sector involvement.

C. Taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

34. The effects of climate change have become more widespread since the adoption of the Madrid Plan of Action in 2002, in which they were addressed in priority direction I, issue 8, on emergency situations, which also encompasses the situation of older refugees, and are now reflected in Goal 13 of the Sustainable Development Agenda: "Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts".

35. ECA has noted that the inclusion of older persons in emergency preparedness within the region is strikingly limited. While some countries have national emergency preparedness plans, few include the needs and challenges of older persons. Most countries cite the limited capacity of relief workers to provide care for older persons in emergency situations. In 2012, and in response to the severe drought in West Africa, HelpAge International undertook a data review and

humanitarian analysis on ageing in Chad and Mali to highlight the situation of older people in the country, support the humanitarian community to understand what data gaps exist and need to be filled and support the inclusion of older people in the planning and implementation of responses.

36. In the past few years, some ECE member States have introduced additional measures to ensure that the specific needs of older persons are taken into account by local authorities and service providers as they prepare for and respond to disasters. From 2014 to 2016, Red Cross organizations in Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Latvia and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Island participated in a European Union project entitled "PrepAGE", on enhancing disaster management preparedness for the older population in the European Union, to introduce specific recommendations for older people in emergency and disaster preparedness and prevention programmes. Other ECE countries have undertaken measures that focus on enhancing emergency preparedness by older persons. In Canada, a "Get prepared" campaign was launched, with a focus on helping those with special needs, including older people. In 2015, the Fire and Rescue Service of Czechia implemented training activities for the leadership of local municipalities and older persons to increase awareness of how to protect themselves in risk and emergency situations.

37. The ECLAC region has emphasized the importance of caring for older people in disaster situations. The subregion of the Caribbean is particularly affected by disasters, which could have a disproportionate effect on older persons. In the Dominican Republic, the National Emergency Commission established a gender- and age-sensitive protection advisory team to develop a protocol to care for older persons in emergency situations and disasters. Anguilla established at-risk registers of older persons who may require assistance, and in Barbados the Vulnerable Persons Committee oversees the needs of vulnerable persons, including older persons, during and after disasters. In Trinidad and Tobago, a provision in the emergency procedures section of the Homes for Older Persons legislation was proposed for proclamation in 2017, mandating biannual evacuation drills. The Cayman Islands has a national hurricane plan that identifies older persons as a priority for shelter. In Colombia, the National Disaster Risk Management System and its National Plan for Disaster Risk Management 2015–2025 have a unit focused on building resilience among older persons.

38. In Asia and the Pacific, some countries have undertaken efforts to include older persons in disaster preparedness and responses; however these efforts are not systematic and remain ad hoc. According to ESCAP, approximately half of the countries in the review cycle reported undertaking some provision to include the specific needs of older persons in humanitarian and disaster relief. Since 2012, four such policies have been developed: the National Disaster Management Policy in Sri Lanka, the National Disaster Management Policy in Bangladesh, the National Disaster Risk Reduction Policy in Nepal and the National Social Protection Strategic Plan in Myanmar, all of which contain specific provisions on vulnerable populations, including older persons.

39. Despite increasing war and conflict in the Western Asia region, the distinct needs of older people in emergencies, as well as their capacity to contribute, have been largely overlooked by disaster risk reduction programmes and humanitarian assistance. A 2013 survey revealed that only 5 per cent of humanitarian assistance projects in the Syrian Arab Republic explicitly addressed older persons as a vulnerable group.[17] Aside from implementing training on providing first aid to older persons in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and the Sudan, national policies

[17] "Age & Disability Monitor" (HelpAge International, April 2014).

and programmes on emergency services in the region do not target older persons. In 2013, the Centre for Studies on Ageing in Lebanon convened a national symposium on older persons in emergencies, aimed at drawing the attention of relief actors to the needs, as well as the opportunities related to, older refugees. This is of particular relevance given the current situation in the country. ESCWA notes that only the Sudan reported on programmes and services directed towards specifically providing for the nutritional and medical needs of older refugees.

D. Promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

40. The Madrid Plan of Action, like Sustainable Development Goal 8, also recognized the importance of work and the ageing labour force, in priority direction 1, issue 2.

41. The policy importance of employment and decent work for older persons continues to vary considerably by region, and is generally based on the degree of population ageing and the availability, level and coverage of pension systems. Furthermore, in most developing countries, informal sector employment still dominates for all age groups, and policies to expand employment opportunities and decent work tend to focus on younger age groups, particularly in countries with a young population structure. Yet, in the absence of wide coverage of social protection systems, employment continues to be an important source of income for older persons in many developing countries.

42. For example, in the ESCWA region, labour participation and retirement policies for older persons continue to be contingent on national social and economic resources and need. In most countries, employment in old age is an economic necessity, whereas in wealthier countries in which Governments strongly support the social and economic security of older persons, some older persons opt to work to remain active. In the public sector, however, some national policies, such as those in Palestine, even encourage early retirement owing to concerns over the size of the public sector and public spending. Iraq amended its legislation in 2014 to allow women with at least three children below the age of 15 to retire early if they have been active in the labour market for 15 years or more. Overall, labour participation and retirement policies for older persons in the region have changed little over the past five years.

43. Older persons across the Asia-Pacific region are subject to mandatory retirement ages, except in Australia, New Zealand and Macao, China. In several countries, the statutory retirement age is 55, and in many there are lower statutory retirement ages for women than for men. Some States, however, including Armenia, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore, have recently increased their retirement ages to better utilize the skills and capacities of older persons, enable higher retirement benefit levels and strengthen the sustainability of pension funds. The Russian Federation will also increase its retirement age for both men and women from 60 and 55, respectively, by six months annually until 2032. Although many older persons in the region work in the informal sector, owing in part to mandatory retirement ages in the formal sector and economic necessity, reliable data on older workers in the informal sector continue to be largely lacking, to the detriment of policies and programmes. In South-East Asia, specific measures are being taken to foster employment opportunities for older persons. In Singapore, the Retirement and Re-employment Act was revised in 2012, making it compulsory for employers to offer re-employment to eligible employees after the retirement age of 62, until the age of 65. In the same year, the Government of Viet Nam adopted its Labour Code,

which facilitates part-time and flexible work arrangements for older persons. The Government of Fiji amended that country's National Employment Centre Decree in 2016 to enable skills training and job search support for the unemployed, including retired persons with certain skills. Similarly, Macao, China, introduced employment services and vocational training measures, including for older workers in the informal sector, for the 2016–2025 period.

44. Since data disaggregated by age and sex on older workers are generally lacking in the African region and most work is in the informal sector, it is hard to get a full picture of the employment situation of older persons, although some countries do have data on the formal sector. Despite data gaps, Governments reported having policies and programmes in place to tackle age discrimination in the labour market, to protect older workers and to otherwise promote decent work for older persons. Some Governments are also raising retirement ages. For instance, in 2012 Côte d'Ivoire raised its retirement age, and in 2014 Zambia raised its retirement age from 55 to 65, although it provides the option of retiring at 55 (see E/CN.5/2017/6, para. 22). Nevertheless, most employment initiatives are focused on youth.

45. In the Latin America and Caribbean region, older persons continue to be economically active. Labour participation rates vary, however, with women participating less on average than men and continuing to be adversely affected by income disparities. Some Governments are increasing the retirement age, with Dominica currently raising its retirement age from 60 to 65 gradually through 2021 and introducing provisions to permit older persons to access their pensions earlier at a reduced rate. While the Caribbean subregion has made progress in fostering and respecting the rights of older persons to decent work and income-generating activities, most countries have not implemented specific measures to promote the re-entry or participation of older workers in the labour force or to enable their access to credit. Nevertheless, the revamping in Trinidad and Tobago of the Senior Citizens Bureau is under way to enable it to serve as a skills bank for older persons.

46. Among the four priority goals set by ECE member States at the 2012 Ministerial Conference on Ageing in Vienna were encouraging longer working lives and maintaining the ability to work. Governments reported that reforms aimed at making labour markets responsive to the consequences of population ageing constituted the third most important area of policy attention. Their efforts to extend working life to reflect longevity are significantly driven by the need to ensure the long-term financial sustainability of pension systems.

47. Governments in the region have launched and sustained programmes to provide employment services designed specifically for older job seekers, as well as incentives for employers to hire older persons, while also enabling financial benefits and flexible working arrangements for older workers and providing disincentives to early retirement. For instance, a project initiated by the Lithuanian Labour Exchange in 2015 enables unemployed people over the age of 55 to obtain and improve qualifications and skills to facilitate re-entry into the labour market. With the aim of creating 15,000 full-time jobs for long-term unemployed persons over the age of 50, a 2016–2017 programme of the Government of Greece provided up to half of monthly wages and non-wage costs, up to €500 monthly, for a period of up to nine months. Other efforts have been directed at tackling ageism in the labour market. A 2017–2018 campaign in the Netherlands, supported by a newly appointed ambassador for unemployed persons over the age of 50, was designed to highlight the positive attributes of older workers.

E. Promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, and achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls

48. The Madrid Plan of Action, under priority direction III, issue 3, focused on the issue of neglect, abuse and violence and the vulnerability of older women, which is also addressed by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Goals 5 and 16.

49. Member States of ECLAC identified the prevention and punishment of violence against older persons at the national level as an area of work that had been promoted or strengthened. Some recent measures provide social and legal assistance, as well as legal frameworks specific to elder abuse. For example, an article added to the 2014 penal code of Ecuador provides prison terms for the abandonment of older persons. The National Service for Older Persons of Chile launched a programme against elder abuse nationwide in 2012, focused on prevention, counselling and the provision of legal assistance. In the Caribbean, the second of two conferences on the abuse of older persons was held in 2013 in Guadeloupe, where Governments engaged in discussions and comparisons of strategies.[12] There is little legislation specifically on elder abuse in the subregion, which is usually addressed in broader laws on assault, domestic violence or theft. Yet, the issue of abuse is increasingly being recognized, with financial abuse most commonly cited. The Dominican Republic amended its penal code in 2014 to impose a penalty for the abandonment or neglect of older persons,[13] adding to the existing specialized unit to prevent violence against older persons.

50. Issues of violence, abuse and neglect of older persons in the ESCWA region continue to receive inadequate research and policy attention. Where data exist, they show that this is a potential area of concern, exacerbated by the increased risk of vulnerability owing to conflicts and other emergency situations in the region. Cases remain largely hidden within families, and deficiencies in legal action deter reporting by victims and further cloud the scope of the problem. Among the countries reviewed in 2017, none had measures to identify cases of abuse or neglect committed against older persons. Countries rely instead on self-reporting, or reporting by non-governmental organizations or media outlets, or on measures targeted at women and families, such as free hotlines or dedicated protection programmes. In most countries these are embedded in family protection and personal status laws.

51. ECE observed that discrimination, violence, abuse and neglect of older persons continue to pose significant challenges to the region, with Governments implementing multisectoral measures to address them. In 2014, Sweden adopted a national strategy on violence towards older people in care and medical care to improve prevention and identification of violence and responses to it. Also in 2014, Ireland introduced a national policy and procedures on safeguarding vulnerable persons at risk of abuse, laying out procedures to be followed by health services when such cases are suspected. In 2013, the Ministry of Health of Romania created a joint task force with police to improve inspections in residential health-care

[12] Frances Jones, *Ageing in the Caribbean and the Human Rights of Older Persons: Twin Imperatives for Action*, ECLAC Studies and Perspectives Series — the Caribbean, No. 45 (Santiago, ECLAC Sub-regional Headquarters for the Caribbean, January 2016). Available from http://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/39854/1/S1501220_en.pdf.

[13] Response of 27 December 2016 by the Government of the Dominican Republic to the ECLAC questionnaire on national reports on the review and evaluation of the implementation of the San José Charter on the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean.

facilities, resulting in over 1,000 inspections and the identification of 174 penal crimes in the span of one year.

52. To increase and sustain awareness of and sensitization to elder abuse, the Netherlands extended its "Older people in safe hands" action plan from 2011 through 2017, which led to increased reporting and the development of local policies and enhanced multisectoral collaboration. The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality of Malta developed a guide on prevention and intervention for professionals who work with older persons. In the United States of America, the Elder Justice AmeriCorps programme was initiated in 2016 to provide legal assistance and support and to build pro bono capacity in the field. The United States also launched the National Adult Maltreatment Reporting System in the same year to produce the first national data on elder abuse to enable monitoring and evaluation and the design of new measures. Some countries are further revising legislation to deter and respond to cases of abuse. For instance, Canada amended its criminal code so that the age of older victims is considered as an aggravating factor in criminal sentencing.

53. In the ESCAP region, 41 per cent of respondents to the regional review currently have targeted legislation that addresses the vulnerabilities and protection needs of older persons. The Government of Australia announced an inquiry by the Australian Law Reform Commission on protecting the rights of older Australians from abuse; the Commission issued its report in 2017. Limited data are available in the region on the extent of violence, abuse and neglect of older persons. Even where data are available, cases are likely underreported and more reliable data is needed to monitor and to inform policies. In the Philippines, a two-year pilot project of the Department of Social Welfare and Development, to be completed in 2018, is aimed at developing a system of mechanisms, procedures and protocols to report, document, investigate and monitor elder abuse cases and provide follow-up services to victims.[14]

IV. Future regional policy focus

54. The report of ECA recommends that African Governments work towards prioritizing ageing issues in national planning but stresses that this needs to be accompanied by financial resources. For instance, the report notes that several member States have no budget allocation for implementing policies. Nevertheless, the lack of data and research in the region also means that policymakers do not see the import of the issues. In the light of the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals and calls for age-disaggregated data, it is hoped that the latter situation may improve. Additionally, policies are still skewed towards women and children rather than having a more age-inclusive approach, which continues to limit progress in, for example, training health-care personnel in geriatrics to provide age-sensitive care.

55. ESCAP again notes that, while there are many national policies and legislation in nearly all member States, their scope varies widely. Additionally, implementation action plans and monitoring are often lacking. Going forward, some of the key policy areas noted are the expansion of and improvement in the level of social protection benefits, and in particular gender inequality and gender gaps that lead to higher poverty rates among older women. Equally, access to decent work for older persons will become a priority in more of the member States with rapidly ageing populations, where more focus on combating age discrimination initiatives is

[14] Input from the Philippines' Department of Social Welfare and Development to the eighth working session of the General Assembly Open-ended Working Group on Ageing, available from https://social.un.org/ageing-working-group/documents/eighth/Inputs%20Member%20States/Philippines.pdf.

needed. Likewise, access to universal free health care and elimination of user fees for health services for older persons will be essential, along with expanding geriatric facilities and addressing the large gaps in qualified care availability with new models and approaches to enhance and support family roles and capacities.

56. ESCWA notes that addressing population ageing in all member States of the region must become a priority to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The key to this is a robust implementation and monitoring mechanism for all policy initiatives on ageing to address the disconnect between policy development and implementation. ESCWA members need to further work towards ageing-specific policies and plans of action on ageing and development and use existing national policies on, for example, poverty, literacy, women, and empowerment, as a springboard to mainstream ageing-related policies and programmes into development. ESCWA also calls for robust regional research and data collection to form the basis of evidence-based policy development. It further advises that, owing to the high level of involvement in the region of civil society organizations in the health and welfare of older persons, better coordination with Government actors and future inclusion of the private sector, which is currently absent, should be a priority.

57. ECE notes that the region will continue to focus on the adaptation of labour markets and the extension of working lives, maintaining social protection systems and health and care systems based on the implications of population ageing, financial sustainability and gender impacts, to meet increased demand. This necessitates continued efforts in combating ageism, supporting lifelong learning, facilitating independent living and ensuring healthy ageing. In some member States, more efforts are still needed to address higher poverty rates among older persons. Attention to discrimination, violence and abuse, as well as to the growing prevalence of dementia, continues to require more research and policy attention. ECE member States are still very committed to the concept of "active ageing" as endorsed by the Vienna Conference in 2012. Further policy development to support this concept will continue to "realize the potential of longevity".[15]

58. The Caribbean member States of ECLAC have made progress on the implementation of policies and programmes in support of older persons. Going forward, ECLAC notes that further work is required in the subregion on addressing the wide spectrum of rights for older persons, including strengthening national mechanisms and frameworks for protecting human rights more generally. There are information and policy gaps covering issues such as free and informed consent for medical treatment, legal capacity, access to justice and rights to culture. More data and information are also needed on specific groups of older persons, such as women; migrants; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons; and ethnic and religious minorities, to better inform policy. The subregional Caribbean office also notes the opportunity for member States to review existing policies in conjunction with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its Goals, as well as other relevant international and regional instruments addressing the situation of older persons, such as the Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway, and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. ECLAC notes that there is still much work to be done on the issue of age discrimination and ageism to shift concepts of negativity about old age. Since care in the region is still predominately undertaken by the family, ECLAC notes that families need more support from Governments to uphold this role by enacting policies and programmes that treat care as something productive and worthwhile for society.

[15] Synthesis report on the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing in the ECE region between 2012 and 2017 (September 2017). Available from www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/pau/age/Ministerial_Conference_Lisbon/Documents/Synthesis_report_MIPAA15.pdf.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

59. The third review and appraisal process has highlighted several common challenges across regions, from the various perspectives of demographic transition, cultural norms and level of economic development. For instance, the health and well-being of older persons and the improvement of related health and care services, as well as the expansion, improvement and sustainability of social protection systems and other income support measures, remain a priority in all regions.

60. Major constraints on the further implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing remain the same as those identified during the second review and appraisal in 2012 in some regions: lack of human and financial resources, lack of political will and lack of data for evidence-based policymaking and, hence, recognition of the need for policy action on ageing. A regional rights-based perspective on ageing is evident in the Latin American region and in the general policy approaches of other Member States, but overall, remains lacking.

61. In the report of the Secretary-General following the second review and appraisal, it was noted that the post-2015 agenda could provide Member States and the United Nations system with an opportunity to anchor the issue of ageing in the global development agenda (see E/CN.5/2013/6, para. 84). Indeed, as some Regional Commissions noted during the present review process, which followed the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals, implementing the priority directions of the Madrid Plan of Action and the relevant regional implementation strategies will help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and contribute to efforts to "leave no one behind". In this regard, the United Nations system has also begun to recognize the importance of addressing population ageing and the health and well-being of older persons in its work to support the attainment of the Goals, as evidenced by the establishment of an informal inter-agency group on ageing in 2017.

62. The Commission may wish to consider the analysis of regional perspectives on the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action contained in the present report, and to make the following recommendations:

(a) Invite Member States and the Regional Commissions to use and strengthen the further implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing as a modality for the inclusion of older persons in the implementation and attainment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals;

(b) Invite Member States to consider the successes and good practices, shortcomings and future priorities identified in their national and regional levels of review and appraisal in furthering implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action;

(c) Request the Regional Commissions to continue to facilitate, including through their intergovernmental bodies, the further implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action based on the priorities identified in their respective outcomes of the regional review and appraisal exercise.